



## Mr. Ford's Own Page

**W**E ARE the only nation in the world that has a job today, and there are indications that the people do not appreciate that fact. We seem to think that we are going to keep that job no matter what we may do. The American people, or part of them, are acting as if they could not possibly kill the goose that lays the golden egg.

The people of the United States are capable of teamwork for long periods and for hard jobs. We have proved that whenever we have a job that enlists our interest and conviction we can go at it in resistless power and united purpose.

Never in all our history was the nation so united as during 1917-18. Take all the great crises of our national life since its beginning, and in none of them was the nation so free of division.

We sometimes get the impression from books that the nation was united during the Revolutionary War. But it wasn't. The defection among "the fathers" was greater than the most violently suspicious patriot could have imagined in 1917. And so it was in the time of the Civil War—the North so torn by division as to endanger the re-election of Abraham Lincoln.

But although we were a more polyglot people in 1917 and had more ties stretching across the seas, the fact is that when the World War came upon us we presented a greater spectacle of unity on the basis of the ideal than ever we had done before.

All of which but emphasizes the question: Why is it that in 1917 we can do everything without division and internal strife, while in 1919 we are pulling and hauling in an endless series of antagonisms which threaten to overturn our whole national prosperity? Why is it?

Why cannot we achieve as high a degree of unity for the purpose of saving the United States as we achieved for the purpose of whipping our enemies?

The first answer to the question is probably this: We are not aware that the United States needs saving.

Well, consider. If you were an enemy of the United States, desirous of depriving her of the lead she has gained, jealous of her natural wealth and industrial productivity, how would you go about it to ruin her, or at least hurl her down to the distressful level of other countries today?

Why, one glance about the world provides you with the method. The surest way to ruin a country today is to continue the war by transferring it to "classes" and "interests," by convincing one section of the people that another section has devilish designs upon them, and then get both sections fighting.

Even the capitalism of one country, seeing its own business foundering in a sea of strikes and its own fine production systems rusting through months of endless bickering and idleness, might be moved to envy against another country where industrial peace still reigned, and might say, "Well, to keep this race even, we ought to foment trouble in that country also. Why should they get away with it all while we are tied up?"

The most vital spot at which you can attack any country today is in its production. The world's forward pace grows feeble and feeble from sheer lack of manufactured articles to use. The war shortage in certain lines of goods was nothing as compared with the strike shortage. War is waste, but at least war is work. Production not only continued but was increased. Whereas peacetime idleness is worse than waste—it is deliberate refusal to avail ourselves of the very means which would cure the condition of which we complain.

**S**PYING out military secrets, blowing up munitions factories, delaying war work—all these were interior attacks made during war times. But bad as they were, none of them, nor all of them together had the power to push a knife-blade into the very heart of the nation, as has interference with work today.

If anyone wants to thrust the United States down to the condition of the workless, moneyless, foodless lands, if anyone wants to injure the country more than war had power to injure it, here is the way to do it:—let him kill the spirit of industry and co-operation in our people, let him stop the wheels of production. That will do it. It will do more, it will ruin the world, because today the United States is the only place where an already half-ruined world can come for help.

It is from this present danger that the country is to be saved. Whether these attacks are encouraged from without by powers that want to halt the United States and hurl her down into hunger and helplessness, or whether they are the result of fallacies in our own thinking, it is plain as daylight that saving the country from these things is *saving the country*.

A second answer to the question we have proposed may well be

this: There was so much irresponsible prophecy concerning the general reconstruction that was to follow the war, that an impression prevails that "the getting is good" just now and all that is necessary is just to demand, and back up the demand by refusals to perform the work which keeps society intact.

Everyone must share the blame of this condition. Whatever has come or is yet to come upon us, we may be sure that no one but ourselves is responsible. If labor distrusts capital, and if capital distrusts labor, both have ample grounds in past experience with each other for the stand they take. What they have sowed, they are reaping. Only with the reaping they are sowing a more bitter reaping still, and it is that which every friend of his country ought to try to prevent. If anyone can believe that the present feeling between capital and labor is the result of *justice* and *fair-dealing* in the past, he can believe anything. But even so, whatever the past, that is no reason why labor and capital cannot and should not get together to build a better foundation for the future. Instead they seem to be trying to knock down even those foundations which remain!

**O**NE would imagine, in observing what is passing today, that each interest had said to itself: "Now is the time to end forever the influence of the other interest," and of course that cannot be done. But what can be done in the battle which will prove that truth is this: the country may be laid waste so far as production is concerned, and our social life may be given a blow such as no military invasion could ever have given it.

Let it be said most solemnly: This is not the time to say, "get while the getting is good." This is a time when all parties, all talents, all interests must be unitedly devoted to pulling our country through a stormy period in the world's history. If this, the strongest country of them all, should go the way of the others, then farewell to progress for several generations.

We need in this country, oh, we need it so badly, a new national morale. We had it during the war. Everybody gave everything they had to the supreme object. And yet it was a lesser object than the one that challenges us now.

Unfortunately, much of the propaganda in favor of law and order and industry is fostered by interests whose motives have always been questionable. Much of the appeal is tainted with materialism of the crassest type. Unless a higher motive can be supplied the results will not be satisfactory.

The nation needs morale, a morale like that which inspired our war work. The nation needs to unite all its ideals and all its power for the accomplishment of a single object in whose achievement all shall find reward.

In 1917 we were united because we knew what we were trying to do. There was unity of knowledge first.

Do we know what we are trying to do today? Is there any such unity of knowledge as to the dangers which now threaten our country, and as to the part we can individually play in averting them?

What we need in order to the creation of a morale that shall save the country from the distresses which wait upon wrong courses, is, first, a complete and convincing instruction in the fact that the social structure is in danger, and second, a complete instruction in the false doctrines and the true doctrines concerning the way in which the country shall be saved, and then an inspirational drive upon the affections and principles of all the people to arouse them once again to the great privilege of serving the United States.

Such a campaign would be of benefit for generations yet to come. How dangerously at the mercy of every false economic doctrine is a country which can be deceived by the fallacy that so-called "capital" and so-called "labor" divide the problem between them! What we need is the recognition of a new third party, the Consuming Public, which is able to set both these disturbing factors in their places.

With nations as with individuals—only in the period of their ignorance can they be deceived by bunco-steerers. Many social promises which are alluring, are not true. Many economic devices look right, but they are wrong. Many radical industrial actions are possible, but they are absolutely destructive of the very benefits they seek. But how are the people to know this unless they are instructed in economic fact and are able to apply the fact to the national condition?

Morale has its roots in unity of knowledge and comes to flower in unity of spirit. Knowledge, not mere advice from interested sources, is what the country needs just now.